

# BULLETIN OF INFORMATION

Douglass Junior High School

1941-1942

Parsons, Kansas

D O U G L A S S J U N I O R H I G H S C H O O L

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A handbook of information  
relative to the new junior high  
school in the making at the Douglass  
Elementary School in Parsons, Kansas. This  
little volume is dedicated to those  
whose foresight, initiative and  
determination have paved  
the way for a greater  
S C H O O L

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# D O U G L A S S J U N I O R H I G H S C H O O L

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## ORGANIZATION

Douglass School was established in 1908 as a regular eight year elementary school. In 1936 the Parsons City School System began operation on the 6-4-4 plan which is recognized as the most efficient pattern in modern educational philosophy. In 1940 the Board of Education authorized the re-organization of the school with additional facilities and faculty to create a new junior high school division designed to acquire the merits of the 6-4-4 plan and to afford greater opportunity for Negro pupils through a new and extended activity program with emphasis upon participation and working under their own leadership. The idea is designed to promote learning by "doing" rather than by observation alone.

Obviously, attendance in the junior high division is optional as all school attendance above the eighth grade is voluntary and, in Parsons, may be made in one of two other schools of the "mixed" type. The Junior high division began formally when grades seven and eight were re-organized into the basic program for the transition into the regular four year division. The fall semester of 1941 marks the initial operation of the ninth grade as a part of the Douglass division of the city-wide 6-4-4 plan. The additional program brings to the plant new equipment and facilities which children of the lower grades use to advantage over a period of years prior to junior high school enrollment. A typical instance of such use has been the program in visual education in operation since October 1940.



### THE AIM

The junior high division, like the entire school, endeavors to provide and maintain facilities for that quality of education which guarantees for its recipients a key to the "abundant life".

"The ability to claim and live the abundant life is not innate. It is acquired through long and patient study. Therefore, the modern school gives large place to those subjects and those types of experiences that mankind has found to satisfy the deeper longings of the soul, and to inspire noblest achievement. Many phases of the curriculum help the individual to supply his needs in relation to his physical existence; other phase include the skill subjects which enable one to use his environment and deal with his fellow-beings; still another phase has to do with the various forms of expression of human thought and feeling that constitute the culture of mankind".

"It is the function of the schools to help every person to find and use the key that will unlock the riches that are the common possession of all. Unlike some other inheritances, this one can be claimed only by those who will prepare themselves to be worthy of it. . . . . Only those who have acquired the methods of interpreting, who have learned the meanings of the various languages through which the heritage is transmitted, who have attuned their eyes and ears, their thoughts and emotions, to catch the messages that are all about us like the unsensed and uncaught radio waves which, in the dead of night, flood the world--only those are educated to succeed in the great task of happiness."<sup>1</sup>

It is the realization of this "abundant life" for our pupils that the junior high division sets forth as its aim--its PURPOSE. In the light of the quoted philosophy and the fact that Negro people have developed a civilization within the ramparts of the civilization which is America, the faculty and studentbody of Douglass take increased devotion to the opportunity to derive the fullest possible development of our individual pupils as members of a democratic society. To achieve this desired end the division operates upon principles basic to any good educational program:

1. Educational Policies Commission: "The Purpose of Education in American Democracy" pp. 36-37



- "1. "Education is a process continuing throughout life which persists most effectively in the years after formal schooling when the habit of educating oneself has been acquired."
2. "Educational growth is developed most effectively when the pupil works at tasks which have meaning, significance, and interest to him."
3. "Pupils should be involved in the initiating, planning, executing, and evaluating of all educational activities."
4. "The educator must be concerned with the whole child, the whole school, and the whole community."
5. "Knowledge, insight, and skills are important, but the means of acquiring them determine the ends actually achieved."
6. "Direct experiences and the use of all forms of creative expression are valuable means for developing permanent interests and for obtaining that personal satisfaction and emotional release which is essential to normal mental health."
7. "The school must accept responsibility for cultivating in its pupils by all available means attitudes of social co-operation, participation, and responsibility, rather than aloofness, competitive striving, and rugged individualism."<sup>2</sup>

Upon these principles rests the conviction that our junior high division can best afford opportunity for development of our children for the "abundant life". The continuous program facilitates longer time educational guidance and eliminates the "break" or "Switch" with its subsequent maladjustments and retardations.



## ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in the ninth and tenth years of the junior high division is optional as pupils may legally enter other schools where they constitute an extremely minute minority. It, therefore, follows that only those who feel that "the educator must be concerned with the whole child, the whole school, and the whole community" enroll in Douglass where these three factors are mutual with faculty and pupils. They believe, in practice, that only those educators who are a part of the pupil's family, his school and his community--the community in which he lives and participates--can best satisfy his specific needs at any educational level.

In 1940-41 pupils enrolled elsewhere found it both convenient and profitable to return to the school for enrollment in all but pure academic subjects. Such a policy has inherent weaknesses from the point of administration of the Douglass program, hence, pupils may not expect to participate in the Douglass program to best advantage unless their basic enrollment is here. This item should receive utmost consideration prior to enrollment in other schools. The exception is in the case of pupils in senior high school and junior college for whom Douglass assumes some measure of responsibility.

## PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT

While the plant does not compare in size with other junior high schools of the city ample equipment is available for work of identical quality. Equipment differs only in size and quantity as is true of the relative enrollments. In no instance does the



equipment differ on the "per pupil" basis, except as would compensate for certain deficiencies in pupil backgrounds, in which case, Douglass strives to supply those needs through school offerings.

Among the unique features of the equipment is the new five-acre athletic field which exceeds in size that of any other city school. No other junior high school in the city has a field for exclusive use. Definite plans are underway through WPA funds for the erection of a stadium for this new field. While far too numerous to mention, the junior high division has at its disposal the equipment of the elementary school unit (and vice versa), thus materially strengthening both units in a fashion scarcely possible in separate plants.

Since the Fall term of 1940 the school has been equipped with a combination sound motion picture, electric phonograph, and public address system. Such equipment is useful not only for instructional purposes but for the activity program.

#### THE FACULTY

The faculty was reorganized in 1940 thus making accommodation for the junior high school division. A new principal and one new teacher were elected. Other teachers on the regular staff were presented with new assignments in accordance with their qualifications and requirements set forth by the State Department of Education and the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Our principal has seven years of experience as administrator of senior high schools and holds a master's degree in Educational Administration from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.



Faculty members are:

Levi Watkins, Principal  
 Thos. D. Early, Assistant  
 Miss Lacy N. Clark  
 Edward C. Lewis, Jr.  
 Miss Alice Neal\*  
 Miss Iantha Howard\*

This faculty represents training and degrees from nine of the country's leading teacher training institutions. It shall be increased or changed as the needs of the division make mandatory. (Astericks indicates teachers who do not give full time to the division.) It is to be noted that the pupil-teacher ratio, that is, the number of pupils for the number of teachers is extremely low almost equivalent to private instruction in the subject fields.

#### GRADES AND CREDITS

Like other schools in the city, all grades are on the five point system and are expressed by means of alphabets with grade point values as follows: A--three points; B--two points; C--one point; D--zero points; and E--a negative one point.

All courses carry standard credit and are transferable to other schools and colleges. Our pupils need not repeat work for which credit is given upon completion of the course. This agreement with other school results from the rating accorded the school by virtue of its having satisfied the requirements assigned to junior high schools of the state.



### STUDENT GOVERNMENT

From the philosophy that education is best acquired through experience and participation the division has created a form of student government. Each homeroom has two regularly elected representatives who plan and help execute measures of government for the studentbody. These representatives are elected each six weeks. The president of the "Student Council" is elected as representative-at-large from the three junior high grades. He serves for a term of one semester. The council is parliamentary in operation and is under the direct advisorship of the Principal. Representatives from the sixth grade are also included within the council.

It is the purpose of the council to provide experience for individual participation in democratic groups.

### NYA EMPLOYMENT AND WORK

The school does not guarantee employment to any pupil, however, it provides work experience for virtually all Negro pupils in the city without regard for the school wherein the pupil is registered. Pupil who are at least 16 years of age and who otherwise qualify for NYA employment are given every assistance in making proper application for work assignments. Once the student is accepted on the NYA personnel the division pursues an unbiased policy of trying to provide each pupil with work experiences in keeping with his particular interest, capacities and abilities. A few pupils who are approved for NYA work and who have their basic enrollment in Douglass find it convenient to render their services prior to the end of the school day.



Pupils interested in small jobs and part time employment will find it convenient to register such wants in the office as frequently person from the city telephone the school for pupils to do odd jobs and errands. More and more, the school is being able to serve as an employment agency for boys and girls. Pupils who cannot be trusted upon their own should not request employment as the division hopes to build up a tradition of service of the highest type and that in time its work might follow pupils throughout the city school system.

#### THE LIBRARY

The library is centrally located in that portion of the building in use by pupils of the junior high division and is amply large for their needs. It is sufficiently removed from the regular elementary classrooms to be free of noises from either recitation or recreation activities in those grades..

The library contains over three thousand volumes of books covering general reference and the various subjects fields. In addition the "Negro Collection" is the largest and most comprehensive selection of books by, for and about Negroes to be found in the city. To this collection of material on the Negro is added the budget of current periodicals including both magazines and newspapers published by Negro institutions. The library boasts of more than a dozen other periodicals thus making the facilities best adapted for those wishing to pursue study in general fields and in those with particular emphasis on the Negro and his contribution to society.

There are no rigid rules concerning the use of the library. Pupils are free to select their own books and may take them from the open shelves. No pupil returns books to the shelves but to the desk where they are then returned to proper positions on the shelves. With permission pupils may take certain volumes from the library.

#### BOOK RENTALS

Through co-operation with the city-wide plan of book rentals the division is able to rent any pupil a complete set of books for one and one-half dollars (\$1.50). Pupils who find it impossible to pay rental fees are afforded opportunity to perform some portion of desirable work in lieu of cash payment. Every pupil is, therefore, provided with necessary text books.

#### HOME ROOMS AND CLUBS

Each class division is organized into a "homeroom" unit under the leadership of some teacher who serves as guide, counselor and friend to the boys and girls under his charge. These units are the background of pupil participation in the activity program. They afford outlet for pupil initiative along lines of particular and specific interests and are also the "tie that binds" the faculty and pupils into one whole working for a common purpose. Clubs are formed by grouping children of mutual interest under the sponsorship of some teacher. Beginning in September 1941, the homeroom period will be included with and preceding the regular activity period thus making for greater flexibility in the program of the homeroom and the time allotted.



### ACTIVITY TICKETS

All pupils in both divisions of the Douglass School pay an annual fee of fifty cents for the "Activity Ticket". No pupil is required to purchase such tickets and all pupils are given opportunity to earn tickets by co-operation with the sale of "Season Athletic Tickets" to adult patrons. All pupils activity tickets are honored for admission to any activity sponsored by the school. If necessary, pupils may purchase activity tickets on the installment plan.

### THE CAFETERIA

The school cafeteria has undergone numerous improvements both in arrangements and in service. In 1941-42 the services in that department will be facilitated greatly by means of a re-organization in the order of serving. The noon meal, already a well balanced ration, shall offer more nourishing food because of the school garden made possible by means of WPA labor. More food can be sold for the regular five cent lunch, which now consists of one meat, one vegetable, drink, salad, and dessert. From the lunches sold an additional number of purchases may be made to accommodate the increased number of free lunches resulting from the garden project. As was true in 1940-41 pupil from needy families shall not be deprived of free lunches because of higher classification in the junior high division.

The cafeteria also serves as a workshop for girls studying foods and domestic service. It is the dining hall for our visiting team and the scene of numerous class dinners and luncheons.

Regular meals are provided by WPA labor consisting of three full time cooks.



### VISUAL EDUCATION

The visual education program is perhaps unique in that the basic instrument, the sound motion picture equipment, is used for regular class work rather than assigned to some "assembly period" to which admission is charged or wherein pupils are left to acquire some educational result merely by observation of the film. On the contrary, each subject is given adequate preliminary preparation and sufficient class followup to insure efficiency from the time and expense allotted the program. Film subjects are held over a three day period and are shown and re-shown according to the needs of the pupil group for which they are provided. It may be here pointed out that films are also shown to elementary children each week unless the subject is too abstract for their use. such a policy thus strengthens the pupils who are to subsequently enter our junior high school division in time to come.

Excursions, experiments, modeling, and the like, also enrichen our curriculum. The flexibility of the small enrollment in our school affords adequate opportunity for transporting the class to the actual scene of the subject under consideration thereby making greater use of the community resources for educational purposes.

### ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS

The Activity Program in 1940-41 took on a wider scope. Football was added for boys and basketball for girl athletes. The school became a charter member of the newly organized Tri-State Musical Festival, held this year in Coffeyville, holding promise of becoming the largest single project for large groups in non-competitive school relations in this area. Pep teams were organized for pupils



of the junior high division at Douglass. The work of training and organizing a school band is underway. Pupils are being taken from the fourth grade and above thus assuring permanency, experience, and quality to the organization over a period of years. The new band is scheduled to make its debut this autumn along with a new basketball team composed entirely of boys from our junior high division. Pupils enrolled in band are urged to begin training prior to the opening of the school term and should watch for the announcement of the date. Special music organizations have been formed and were presented during the 1940-41 term. With refinement and additions these organizations shall represent the new unit during 1941-42.

Virtually all Negro pupils in the city pursue the activity program at Douglass, if they participate in the so-called "Activity Program" of school life. Pupils interested in this phase of school activities should make known their interests and abilities as early in the term as possible. Detail information should be obtained prior to enrollment in school so that the academic and activity programs may not retard the pupil's total school progress but rather accelerate such progress.

#### SCHOOL PARTIES

It is the policy of the school to sponsor such parties and social events as are wholesome recreation and experiences for young people of high school age. Such parties are usually an outgrowth of the regular activity program and provide unusual experience in initiating, planning, executing, and evaluating projects of social significance. All parties are under the careful supervision of faculty members and are, therefore, free of undesirable guests or performances.

## SCHOOL PAPER

In 1941-42 the junior high division anticipates the publication of the first school paper. Such project shall be a by-product of the advance English class. It shall provide a medium of expression for school talent and a periodic source of information relative to the work of the school.

The school paper shall be an enlargement and improvement upon the periodical which appeared three times under student direction and management during the 1940-41 term.

## THE COURSE OF STUDY

## Seventh Grade:

Required

English  
Geography  
Home Economics (girls)  
Manual Training (boys)  
Mathematics  
Nature Study (Science)  
Physical Education

Electives

Art  
Band  
Chorus

## Eighth Grade:

American History  
English  
Home Economics (girls)  
Manual Training (boys)  
Hygiene and Health (Science)  
Mathematics  
Physical Education

Art  
Band  
Chorus  
Speech

## Ninth Grade:

English  
Mathematics  
Physical Education  
Science

Art  
Band  
Chorus  
\*Citizenship-Guidance  
History  
Home Economics  
Boys Foods  
Industrial Art  
Speech

\*This is a citizenship course covering the general field of citizen-



ship but is supplemented with a survey of the role played by the Negro citizen in our democracy. While no effort shall be made to offer vocational training emphasis shall be placed upon ways, means, and opportunities of securing such training and subsequent employment. It is a course which the division feels should be required of all pupils who hope to find employment after the school years and who hope later to pursue courses of preparation for elective vocations. The course is enriched by the excellent budget of reference and current periodical material on the Negro which is to be found in our library. Through the cooperation of Negro institutions and organizations over the country in supplementing our materials this course promises to be not only our exclusive course but our feature course.

#### CLASS SCHEDULE

The 1941-42 Class Schedule is now prepared and will be supplied each pupil upon enrollment for classes at the beginning of the 1941-42 term. Inspection of the "Master Schedule" may be made by calling at the Principal's office. Individual pupil schedules are prepared for each pupil enrolled. These "Program Cards" eliminate much worry and lost time on the part of pupils seeking to find their class locations. Each pupil's program is planned in such a manner as to harmonize grade requirements with his individual guidance record. Such planning makes for maximum efficiency in the learning process and virtually eliminates all "failures" on the part of pupils. Our guidance program is not only important in planning pupil programs but in assisting the pupil with his needs throughout the school term.



### PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Concurrent with the addition of the ninth grade to the junior high division will be the initiation of a new parent-teacher unit. Parents of pupils enrolled in the division which includes grades seven, eight and nine, constitute an organization designed to facilitate co-operation among parents and teachers working with children pursuing junior high school work in Douglass. It is not the purpose of the new parent unit to assume the work of the regular PTA organization and membership in both is encouraged. Meetings are held once each month during the school year. For further information telephone the office of the Principal.

### COMMUNITY RELATIONS

It is the policy of the school to render a distinct service to the community. Facilities of the building, equipment and grounds are available for any worthwhile service to the community. Community groups find the school an ideal place for desirable programs, projects, recreational and other wholesome activities. In most cases there is no charge for use of the school and its equipment. The exception occurs when the building is used for purely personal gain and where admission is charged the public. In such cases, there is a small fee of ten dollars (\$10.00).

Faculty members and musical organizations are constantly at the service of the community and may be had without cost. "An invitation is the fee for our service". Community leaders, citizens, visitors and out-of-town guests are especially invited to attend assembly programs held each Thursday morning at 10:20. Where conditions justify special assemblies will be called to facilitate any deserving community project.



Red Cross and WPA classes have made use of our plant and are invited to continue the use of our facilities for community service wherever possible without injury to the regular school program.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1.

QUESTION: Is the new junior high school segregation?

ANSWER: No. It is separation for the advantages of "exclusive ownership" in the facilities of education. No pupil is compelled to attend the new school.

2.

QUESTION: If the junior high school at Douglass succeeds will all Negro children ever be forced to attend there?

ANSWER: Under present state law no institution or organization can force separation in schools above the eighth grade. When separate schools exist it is solely because of better educational opportunities offered pupils enrolled within them.

3.

QUESTION: Is the building large enough?

ANSWER: Yes. Our plant has 14 rooms and still additional smaller rooms. Under the departmental system of moving classes the building is amply large for its program.

4.

QUESTION: Are the teachers qualified?

ANSWER: Yes. Each teacher is qualified for the assignment he has. Teacher credentials are available for inspection at the office of the Superintendent of City Schools.

5.

QUESTION: Should parents support the new school?

ANSWER: Yes and No. If parents are interested in the fullest possible development of their children by means of the most modern basic principles of education, the answer is an emphatic "YES". If, on the other hand, parents are more interested in maintaining a system of exclusively "mixed" schools rather than a system best from the standpoint of pupil development then the answer is "NO" --a million times "NO".

6.

QUESTION: Where may I get further information?

ANSWER: At the office of the Principal at Douglass or the Superintendent of Schools.